

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO CG CAMP PENDLETON CALIF

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E.O. 11652:N/A

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SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN REPATRIATES

FOR SENIOR CIVIL COORDINATOR

1. IN THE WAKE OF THE KHMER REPATRIATES RECENT TRIP TO NEW YORK, IT NOW APPEARS THAT THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO CAMBODIA BEFORE CAMP PENDLETON CLOSES - IF, IN FACT, THEY ARE ABLE TO RETURN AT ALL. IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY FOR THE TASK FORCE TO FORMULATE PLANS FOR THE

REPATRIATES ONCE THE CAMP IS CLOSED.

2. OUR PRELIMINARY VIEWS ARE AS FOLLOWS: FIRST, THE USG WILL NOT CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE REPATRIATES INDEFINITELY. OTHER VIABLE ALTERNATIVES EXIST AND IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE AND TOO TIME CONSUMING TO CONTINUE WITH THE PRESENT PROGRAM. SECOND, THE UNHCR WILL NOT ACCEPT
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RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE KHMER REPATRIATES. THEY

HAVE ALREADY BEEN APPROACHED ON THIS PROBLEM SEVERAL TIMES AND THEY HAVE ALWAYS REPLIED THAT THEY CANNOT HELP. THIRD, THE KHMER REPATRIATES SHOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DETERMINE WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM ONCE THE CAMP CLOSES. THEY HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY HELPFUL IN THE PAST AND WE FEEL THAT IT WOULD BE UNFAIR AND POSSIBLY COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO FORCE THEM TO ACCEPT A SOLUTION WHICH WE ON OUR OWN HAVE WORKED OUT FOR THEM.

3. WITH THE ABOVE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND, THE TASK FORCE HAS FORMULATED THE FOLLOWING TENTATIVE APPROACH TO THE REPATRIATE PROBLEM: INITIALLY, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE USG WOULD MEET WITH THE REPATRIATES AND EXPLAIN WHY THE USG WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THEM AS WE HAVE DONE IN THE PAST. IN THIS EXPLANATION, THERE WOULD ALSO BE MENTION OF THE UNHCR'S CONTINUED UNWILLINGNESS TO BECOME INVOLVED. ONCE THESE INTRODUCTORY DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, THE USG REPRESENTATIVE WOULD THEN EXPLAIN TO THE KHMER THE THREE OPTIONS OPEN TO THEM.

A. THEY COULD APPLY FOR ENTRANCE TO A THIRD COUNTRY. WHETHER OR NOT THEY WOULD BE ACCEPTED WOULD OF COURSE DEPEND ON THE COUNTRY TO WHICH THEY APPLY.

B. THEY COULD ACCEPT A SPONSORSHIP AND LEAVE THE CAMP LIKE ANY OTHER REFUGEE. IF THEY SO DESIRE, THE KHMER REPATRIATES COULD REMAIN REGISTERED WITH THE UNHCR AND COULD RETURN TO CAMBODIA WHEN PHNOM PENH AGREES. THE USG WILL PAY THEIR WAY. SINCE WE BELIEVE THAT THIS OPTION IS BY FAR THE BEST ONE OPEN TO THE REPATRIATES, WE ARE WILLING, IF THEY SO DESIRE TO TRY AND LOCATE MASS SPONSORSHIP OFFERS WHICH WILL KEEP THEM TOGETHER.

C. THEY COULD AGREE TO BE PLACED IN A USG ORGANIZED WORK PROJECT IN WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE TO WORK TO PAY FOR THEIR FOOD AND LODGING. UNDER THIS OPTION, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE TO LIVE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY, BUT THEY WOULD HAVE TO LIVE IN CONDITIONS WHICH ARE MUCH LESS PLEASANT AND MORE RESTRICTIVE THAN IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS. FURTHERMORE, THE REPATRIATES WOULD HAVE NO SAY IN WHERE THEY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GO OR WHAT THEY DO, NOR COULD THEY BE ASSURED THAT THEY WILL ALL BE PLACED TOGETHER ON THE SAME WORK PROJECT.

D. IF THE KHMER REPATRIATES REFUSE TO ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE THREE OPTIONS, THEY WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO ONE OF THE INS DETENTION CENTERS SIMILAR TO THE ONE AT EL CENTRO. (USE OF THE DETENTION CENTER IS NOW BEING DISCUSSED WITH INS.)

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4. AS WAS MENTIONED BEFORE, THE ABOVE APPROACH IS A TENT-
ATIVE ONE WHICH REPRESENTS THE BEST THOUGHTS OF THE TASK
FORCE. THEREFORE, WE WANT YOU TO REVIEW IT AND TO CABLE
US YOUR COMMENTS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. WHAT WE WANT TO DO
IS TO INDUCE THEM TO ACCEPT A SPONSOR AND LEAVE CAMP.
WE WILL BE AWAITING YOUR REPLY AS TO WHETHER YOU THINK
THE ABOVE APPROACH WILL ACCOMPLISH OUR OBJECTIVE. JEFF
MILLINGTON (OSC/IATF) IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO PE DLETO
EARLY THIS WEEK TO START COUNSELLING THE KHMER REPATRIATES
. WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR REPLY BEFORE HE DEPARTS FOR
CALIFORNIA. KISSINGER

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